



**San Antonio Conservation Society
to Salute Winners of its Historic Preservation Awards**

The San Antonio Conservation Society will honor the winners of its biannual Historic Preservation Awards for the Built Environment and its Texas Preservation Hero awards at a dinner and awards ceremony on Thursday, March 27 from 6 - 9 p.m. at the Briscoe Western Art Museum in downtown San Antonio.

The purpose of the Historic Preservation Awards is to honor those who have reached the highest level of accomplishment in historic preservation by recognizing the quality of restoration and rehabilitation projects in the built environment (both residential and non-residential). The Texas Preservation Hero Awards honor groups or individuals whose work embodies the purpose of the San Antonio Conservation Society through historic preservation or conservation accomplishments.

“This event offers the opportunity to showcase how preservation and new or continued use can be part of growth and development in our city while maintaining the character of San Antonio,” says Sue Ann Pemberton, President, San Antonio Conservation Society. “It is fitting that the venue for our celebration is The Briscoe Western Art Museum, which is a prime example of an adaptive reuse project.”

The 2014 Historic Preservation Awards for the Built Environment recipients are (a detailed description of these buildings can be found at the end of this release):

- **Austin Hall**, owned by Sam Houston State University
- **Bliss**, owned by Jack and Liza Lewis
- **Eagar House, Eagar Dependency and Hermann Carriage House**, owned by City of San Antonio
- **El Rinconcito de Esperanza**, owned by Esperanza Peace & Justice Center
- **Mission San José y San Miguel de Aguayo**, owned by the Archdiocese of San Antonio
- **The Pendleton Francis House**, owned by Sidney J. Francis, II
- **San Antonio Eye Center**, owned by San Antonio Eye Center
- **South Texas Heritage Center**, owned by The Witte Museum
- **Steel House Lofts**, owned by Dennis and Jill McDaniels
- **St. Mark’s Episcopal Church**, owned by St. Mark’s Episcopal Church

The Texas Preservation Hero Awards are (a detailed profile of these individuals can be found at the end of this release):

- **Paul Barwick, Special Projects Director for the City of Boerne**
- **Lewis F. Fisher, Author**
- **Suzanne Scott, General Manager of the San Antonio River Authority**
- **Leticia Vacek, City Clerk of San Antonio**

Cocktails begin at 6 p.m.; the dinner and presentation of awards begins at 7 p.m. Chairman for this year's awards ceremony, which is open to the public, is Conservation Society board member Claire Golden; vice chair is board member Janet Dietel.

The celebration begins with Mariachi music and cocktails on the patio. A full-course dinner will follow, accompanied by music from Ashlee Rose, Texas Music Awards' Female Vocalist of the Year 2013. Cost is \$90 per person; tables of eight or ten are also available.

Advance reservations and payment for the awards dinner are required by March 20 and can be made by contacting the Conservation Society headquarters at (210) 224-6163; fax (210) 224-6168 or conserve@saconservation.org.

NOTE: More information and advance interviews with owners are available upon request, as well as present and historic photos of the buildings, by contacting Jeanne Albrecht at 210/392-9047 or jca@satx.rr.com.

DESCRIPTIONS OF 2014 AWARD WINNERS

BUILDING AWARDS

Austin Hall, owned and located at Sam Houston State University:

The San Antonio Conservation Society is recognizing the outstanding contribution made by Sam Houston State University for commissioning the exacting restoration of the University's 1853 Austin Hall including restoring and repointing brick, addressing the deterioration of the plaster covered columns, restoring original wood windows and shutters.

Background: *Austin Hall, the oldest building on the campus of Sam Houston State University, was designed in the Greek Revival style and completed in 1853. In antebellum Texas, almost all public buildings shared a similar design: large rectangular masses with a formal composition, crowned with a commanding tower or, more often, a simple cupola. Austin Hall is representative of this style and reflects the level of cultural and economic development of Huntsville in the early 1850s.*

By 2010, this State Antiquities Landmark was showing signs of deterioration, primarily from water infiltration. Restoration work of the exterior and select work on the interior was completed in 2012 and included:

- *rotted wood lintels were replaced with structural steel on the interior of the wall and faced with a decorative wood lintel to maintain the exterior appearance*
- *careful repointing of the extremely soft brick walls*
- *restoration of the plaster columns*
- *complete restoration of the wood windows and shutters*
- *replacement of rotted wood trim*
- *repainting the woodwork*
- *replacement of the flat seam metal roof*

Bliss, owned by Jack and Liza Lewis:

The San Antonio Conservation Society is recognizing the outstanding contribution made by Jack and Lisa Davis for adding to the revitalization of an inner city neighborhood by bringing a new use to an abandoned Humble Oil service station, transforming it into Bliss, a successful restaurant, and revealing its Zigzag Art Deco style features by removing a brick veneer added to the structure.

***Background:** This historic Humble Oil gas station was built in Zigzag Art Deco style in 1929 by architect John Staub for Humble Oil, serving as a gasoline station for some 30 years before being retrofitted into an automotive repair shop. Since 1980, the building had been vacant and un-used. The recent restoration project called for removal of a brick veneer to expose the original 1929 plaster/tile details and engaged pilasters. The original wood doors and steel windows of the original station building were also restored. The new addition of kitchen, support areas and a private dining space were rendered in a contrasting material attached at the rear with respect of the original structure. The main dining room is placed in the reclaimed space of the original filling station.*

Eagar House, Eagar Dependency and Hermann Carriage House, owned by City of San Antonio:

The San Antonio Conservation Society is recognizing the outstanding contribution made by the HemisFair Park Redevelopment Corporation for the City of San Antonio for restoring the repurposed Eagar House, Eagar House Dependency and the Hermann Carriage House, showing leadership for potential exterior restoration and reuse of other historic buildings in HemisFair.

***Background:** The Eagar House, Eagar Dependency and Hermann Carriage House on the HemisFair site are State Archeological Landmarks. The house is a one-story, limestone structure built in 1870 by John H. Kampmann for Sarah and Robert Eagar, and remains in its original location for 140 years. Sarah lived in her home until she died in 1947 at age 105. With her age and land holdings, Sarah was a strong influence in the growth of San Antonio. Sarah and her daughter Florence were among the first women in San Antonio to undertake the preservation of the Alamo. When the Urban Renewal Agency sought to acquire the property in the 1960s (as part of the HemisFair planning), Sarah's widowed daughter Florence Eagar Roberts was living in the home as she approached her 100th birthday. The Urban Renewal Agency purchased the home in November of 1966. Among the significant architectural aspects of the one-story home are its 18" to 24" limestone block walls; front and back porches that span the house; and wood columns and shutters that frame windows of wavy glass. Over time, the wood columns, porches, foundation and limestone walls had deteriorated. The latest restoration work began in February 2012 and was completed in August that same year at a cost of \$805,000. The limestone block foundation walls in two areas of the Eagar House were found to be undermined and sinking, so they were stabilized by adding concrete footings beneath the original block foundation. The Carriage House was also fully rehabilitated because the perimeter wall structural system had been seriously compromised by previous restoration efforts. This necessitated replacement of over half of the wall studs and the addition of lateral bracing. The Eagar dependency was also rehabilitated after as a part of this project.*

El Rinconcito de Esperanza, *The Little Corner of Hope*, owned by Esperanza Peace & Justice Center:

The San Antonio Conservation Society is recognizing the outstanding contribution made by the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center for its contribution to the near westside neighborhood of a multidisciplinary cultural center named El Rinconcito de Esperanza, consisting of three historic buildings, carefully adapted to new uses utilizing green building practices.

Background: *El Rinconcito de Esperanza consists of three historic buildings and a large open green space. The rehabilitation began in 2012 with more than 50% recycled wood from structures in the nearby community, including reclaimed 2' x 6' oak planks recycled from St. Mary's University's baseball park bleachers. 100% of the floor, porch and ceiling decking of the main building were constructed of the reclaimed wood. A large percentage of the existing building's total construction and demolition waste was recycled and thus diverted from landfill. The building envelopes, lighting and VRV mechanical systems were all designed to minimize cooling loads. Strategies include deep wrap-around porches for shading; high-efficiency locally controlled and ductless mechanical systems; day-lit interior spaces with larger wall openings to reduce lighting loads; and introducing double French doors and reconditioned operable windows oriented to the prevailing summer breezes. Adding deep porches to the south and east facades minimize direct solar gain, and provide naturally cool outdoor spaces. Finally, reflective energy responsive standing seam metal roofs on 5" of rigid insulation provided a durable and energy efficient roof for all of the structures. Connections to this courtyard were encouraged through wrap-around porches, breezeways and sheltered outdoor spaces that invite the community through the site and into protected spaces.*

Mission San José y San Miguel de Aguayo, owned by the Archdiocese of San Antonio:

The San Antonio Conservation Society is recognizing the outstanding contribution made by the Archdiocese of San Antonio for the meticulous conservation of the intricately carved limestone façade of Mission San Jose y San Miguel de Aguayo, preserving a significant example of Spanish Colonial Baroque ornament, unmatched by any other colonial era stone carvings in the United States.

Background: *The façade of Mission San José is one of the most significant features of any of the Texas missions because of the intricate level of detail and relief in its carved limestone. The double-height façade frames the entrance doors to the church and contains a wealth of carved floral and vegetal ornament intertwined with cherub figures, as well as six larger sculptures of various saints. In January 2010, a three-phase program of stabilization and restoration work began reaching completion in 2012. Mission San José y San Miguel de Aguayo, often called the "Queen of the Missions," is the largest of the five former Spanish Colonial mission compounds in San Antonio. Established at its current location in 1727, the present large masonry mission church was constructed between 1768 and 1782 by a variety of master masons from New Spain. The façade retains a surprisingly high degree of original fabric (nearly 70 percent) having survived periods of neglect and structural instability throughout the 19th century. Mission San José is a designated National Historic Site, a Texas State Historic Site, a recorded Texas Historic Landmark, and is protected as a Texas State Antiquities Landmark. The goals of the restoration project were to conserve all of the remaining original 18th century stone and mortar, and evaluate—on a case by case basis—all earlier 20th century repairs and then remove those which were stylistically inappropriate, failing or contributing to the deterioration of the original stone. Within the stone conservation goals were two overarching concerns: 1) identification and*

remediation of potential fall hazards and 2) water management. All stone units, as well as all existing repairs, were inspected and those which were cracked, loose or semi-detached were either removed and replaced, or removed and reattached. Steps were proposed to improve water flow and drainage over the carved stonework and adjacent rubble walls, and evacuate it at the base of the wall.

Pendleton Francis House, owned by Sidney J. Francis, II:

The San Antonio Conservation Society is recognizing the outstanding contribution made by Sidney J. Francis, II's restoration of the Pendleton Francis House, a board and batten vernacular cottage rebuilt about 1890, carefully repairing or replacing to match the original features as necessary including siding, corrugated metal roof, porch flooring and attic ventilation louvers.

Background: *The Pendleton Francis house is one of several structures that comprise Dublin Plantation (the George Francis Farmstead) in the northeastern corner of Guadalupe County, Texas and has been recommended for listing on the National Register of Historic Places by the Texas Historical Commission. The small frame cottage is a simple vernacular, one-story, board and batten structure that contains three rooms and measures approximately 28 feet X 28 feet and appears to have been rebuilt about 1890. Simple wooden stairs access a recessed porch with doors that open into the living room and kitchen; there is also a bedroom. The house does not have electricity or running water. The Pendleton Francis house had been vacant for many years, and though stabilized by the current owner many years ago, it was deteriorating after being damaged by storms in recent years. In 2011-2012, a full restoration of the house occurred. Board and batten siding was repaired and missing lumber was replaced to match the original. New battens were milled to match missing original wood where necessary. The overall project included installation of new corrugated metal roof to match the original; chimney, firebox and hearth repair; repair of original window frames with care taken to retain original glass where intact and careful reglazing of windows were required; and repair of porch flooring where possible and replacement of missing flooring to match the original. The work was completed in November 2012. The house is an excellent example of rural domestic architecture that has been carefully restored.*

San Antonio Eye Center, owned by the San Antonio Eye Center:

The San Antonio Conservation Society is recognizing the outstanding contribution made by the San Antonio Eye Center for setting a new standard in the River North neighborhood by introducing a new function to a vacant historic wood frame house, incorporating a major addition and transforming it into a state-of-the-art eye clinic.

Background: *Designated as a City of San Antonio Historic Landmark in 1988, the Dietzmann House, located at 511 Dallas Street, sat vacant for 20 years prior to the beginning of its restoration in 2011. Due to its landmark status, the house could neither be torn down nor removed from the site. The vacant 1880s residence went through a two-year renovation to become an eye clinic. The original building maintained its historic character while an addition that ties in cohesively within the historic context was added to accommodate the spatial needs of a state-of-the-art eye clinic. As an existing, non-original addition at the rear of the house had to be removed; the new addition was set back from the original structure in order to maintain the historic integrity of the residence and so "if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired," as stipulated by the HDRC. The restoration of the main residence included restoration to the front porch, the two*

hipped dormers at the center front and side of the main roof, wood trim, 4/4 wood windows, wood doors and the removal of asbestos and vinyl siding. The wood steps and floor were replaced on the front three bay porch; the decorative brackets and turned balusters were restored. A new standing seam metal roof was installed, tying the new and existing buildings together.

South Texas Heritage Center, owned by The Witte Museum:

The San Antonio Conservation Society is recognizing the outstanding contribution made by The Witte Museum for rehabilitating the historic Pioneer Hall constructed in 1936 to celebrate the Texas Centennial, sympathetically adding to it and creating the new South Texas Heritage Center Museum in which the stories of South Texas settlers are now taught.

Background: *The new South Texas Heritage Center on The Witte Museum campus continues the original founder's mission of teaching the stories of South Texas settlers. The historic Pioneer Hall, a State Archaeological Landmark, has historical importance, both as a building constructed to commemorate Texas' Centennial Celebration of 1936, and as a meeting hall for three groups whose history is intertwined with the founding of Texas: the Pioneers, Trail Drivers, and Texas Rangers. Designed by one of San Antonio's most prominent architects, Ayers & Ayers, in 1936, Pioneer Hall has had the same use for over 70 years, with few alterations made to the building.*

This challengeable restoration project was to design a sensitive addition that would enhance the beauty of this important historic Beaux-Arts building. The addition, reminiscent of a 1930s era park pavilion, is full of light sweeping views of the river. The steel-framed curtain wall of the addition encloses a grand 30-foot atrium space, which serves as the entrance hall for the new center. The highlight of the new landscape surrounding the South Texas Heritage Center is the riverside amphitheater that uses cut stone benches and natural boulders to minimize the impact on the tree-covered park setting. The project was completed in May 2012.

Steel House Lofts, owned by Dennis and Jill McDaniels:

The San Antonio Conservation Society is recognizing the outstanding contribution made by Dennis and Jill McDaniels for enhancing the urban feel of South Flores Street by converting the 1913 Peden Iron and Steel Company's warehouse, designed by architect Atlee Ayres, into upscale loft apartments retaining unique character defining features such as clerestory windows.

Background: *Steel House Lofts was originally the Peden Iron and Steel Company's warehouse, designed in 1913 by renowned architect Atlee Ayres. The building served as the hub for raw iron and steel, which was brought in by rail on the south side of the building, then fabricated and loaded onto trucks on the north side, and taken to build sites all over San Antonio and Central Texas. The building housed a hardware company, a General Motors parts division, a paper company, a wholesale furniture business, a realty company, and finally a vacant building. The new owner's adapted the old building into a new community of 67 distinct two and three-bedroom floor plans, while preserving and sustaining many elements. They preserved the high, exposed-beam ceilings; original concrete columns; century-old clerestory windows; and exposed brick; docks were turned into patios.*

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, owned by St. Mark's Episcopal Church:

The San Antonio Conservation Society is recognizing the outstanding contribution made by St. Mark's Episcopal Church for the recent project to address exterior maintenance and conservation issues, returning the historic Richard Upjohn-designed Gothic Revival Style limestone church to a state which restores its appearance and condition as it was when completed in 1875.

***Background:** St. Mark's restoration of the Gothic Revival-style sanctuary and the surrounding site included updating functional aspects of the sanctuary, while repainting and preserving important historic fabric that had been damaged by the passage of time and more acute maintenance issues, such as moisture infiltration. With its timeless limestone walls, art-glass windows, projecting buttresses, steep roofs, and angled walls, St. Mark's Episcopal Church is a downtown San Antonio complex spanning a century of architectural evolution, anchored by an early Gothic Revival style sanctuary designed in 1859 by master architect Richard Upjohn of New York. Completed in 1875, the church later expanded to the current configuration with 1926-27 additions of a Parish Hall and Education Building designed by the Alfred Giles Company and Albert Felix Beckmann. The additions of the narthex, bell tower and cloister to the sanctuary in 1949 were designed by architect Henry Steinbomer. During the recent restoration, the limestone walls were repointed and cleaned of damaging biological growth; vegetation was moved away from the walls; and gutters were updated.*

2014 Historic Preservation Hero Awards

Paul Barwick, Special Projects Director for the City of Boerne:

The San Antonio Conservation Society is recognizing the outstanding contribution made by Paul Barwick, Special Projects Director for the City of Boerne, for utilizing his vision energy, hard work, and creative abilities to spearhead many successful efforts to keep Boerne's History alive through special events, interpretive displays, and preservation projects.

***Background:** Paul created and placed numerous interpretive displays along community trails and at the Patrick Heath Library, helping to communicate the natural and cultural heritage to both residents and guests of the county. Paul partnered with the Boerne Area Historical Preservation Society to stabilize the historic Kuhlmann-King House. The largest event, the Kendall County Heritage Passport, consisted of monthly events for an entire year to celebrate the county's 150th birthday. Additional successful events include the 100th Anniversary of the Old Railroad Tunnel to Fredericksburg; Freethinker and Freetail Fandango at the Sisterdale Dance Hall; and an Evening with the Texas Rangers.*

Lewis F. Fisher, Author:

The San Antonio Conservation Society is recognizing the outstanding contribution made by Lewis Fisher for his definitive and exactly researched books on local history and preservation including *Saving San Antonio: The Precarious Preservation of a Heritage* and, under his aegis as Maverick Publishing, for producing numerous works by dedicated local historians.

***Background:** Lewis was hired by the San Antonio Conservation Society to write its history, which was published by Texas Tech Press as *Saving San Antonio: The Precarious Preservation of a Heritage*. The book has served as a text for university classes on historic preservation. Lewis has authored many books of local history to include, *River Walk: The Epic Story of San Antonio's River*; *The Spanish Missions of San Antonio*; *San Antonio: Outpost of Empires*; *C. H.**

Guenther & Son at 150 Years: The Legacy of a Texas Milling Pioneer; St. Mark's Episcopal Church: 150 Years of Ministry in Downtown San Antonio, 1858-2008; and most recently, Chili Queens, Hay Wagons and Fandangos: The Spanish Plazas in Frontier San Antonio. Lewis has also published books of postcard images of the plazas, Fort Sam, and the missions. Under his Maverick Publishing, he has produced many more books on our local history: I. Wayne Cox - *The Spanish Acequias of San Antonio*; Maria Watson Pfeiffer - *School by the River: Ursuline Academy to Southwest School of Art & Craft, 1851-2001*; Donald E. Everett – *San Antonio's Monte Vista: Architecture and Society in a Gilded Age*; David P. Green – *Place Names of San Antonio Plus Bexar and Surrounding Counties*; Sterling Holmesly – *HemisFair '68 and the Transformation of San Antonio*; Eldon Cagle, Jr. – *Fort Sam: The Story of Fort Sam Houston, Texas* and many other subjects of local and historical interests.

Suzanne Scott, General Manager of the San Antonio River Authority (SARA):

The San Antonio Conservation Society is recognizing the outstanding contribution made by Suzanne Scott, General Manager, San Antonio River Authority, for exercising great stewardship as she oversaw the 245 million dollar Mission Reach Ecosystem and Recreation Project in addition to her superlative leadership on other critically important river and flood control projects.

Background: *Suzanne has been the active collaborative leader, analyst and strategic planner of SARA's Museum Reach Project, Mission Reach Project and the Westside Creeks Projects. The \$245 million dollar Mission Reach project was accomplished as a public-private partnership through Bexar County, the City of San Antonio, USACE, and through private donations collected by the San Antonio River Foundation. The Mission Reach Ecosystem Restoration and Recreation Project will continue to transform an eight-mile stretch of the San Antonio River into a quality riparian woodland ecosystem. Its completion allows the public to participate in the Hike and Bike Path, River Walk Pedestrian Path, and water activities such as paddling and kayaking on the river.*

Leticia Vacek, City Clerk, City of San Antonio:

The San Antonio Conservation Society is recognizing the outstanding contribution made by Leticia Vacek, City Clerk of San Antonio, who since her appointment in May, 2004, transformed the way the city maintains and preserves its historic records and for expanding the means by which they are made available to the public, such as creating a web-based digital archives.

Background: *Leticia established the City's first archival program and hired the City's first archivist, ensuring that valuable City records were properly catalogued and stored. Leticia received two grants from the National Historical Publication and Records Commission, which allowed funding for a second full-time archivist. She discovered many valuable City documents that were stored in unassuming places. One important find, hanging in plain view in a lunch room, was an original April 18, 1843 letter signed by General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna. This letter, along with other original documents, was restored, reproduced for public viewing, and archived. With assistance from the City's Information Systems Department, Leticia created the City's first web-based municipal archives digital collection for historical records. She began to digitize all the Minutes of the City Council, dating back to its beginning in 1815 and the earlier San Fernando de Bexar's Minute Books from 1770-1824. Leticia has implemented other notable programs, including creation of an E-file Campaign Finance Reporting System for candidates and officeholders. She instituted a Passport Acceptance Facility, which has currently brought in over \$800,000 in new revenue to the City General Fund.*